

DEC 26 2004

J. H. Lee

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants : Hiroshi NOMURA
Appl. No. : 10/646,908
Filed : August 25, 2003
For : LENS BARREL INCORPORATING THE ADVANCING/RETRACTING
MECHANISM

Group Art Unit : 2851
Examiner : SMITH, Arthur
Confirmation No. : 1316

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.111

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
220 20th Street S.
Customer Window, Mail Stop _____
Crystal Plaza Two, Lobby, Room 1B03
Arlington, VA 22202

Sir :

This communication is responsive to the Official Action dated August 18, 2004, which set forth a shortened three-month statutory period for response to expire on November 18, 2004. Submitted with the present Response is a Request for Extension of Time of one month, thereby increasing the time for responding to the outstanding Office Action to December 20, 2004 (December 18, 2004 falling on a Saturday), pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.7. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections set forth in the Official Action, in view of the herein-contained remarks.

STATEMENT OF SUBSTANCE OF INTERVIEW

Applicant wishes to express his appreciation to Examiner Smith for the interview of November 10, 2004. During the interview, Applicant's representative, Attorney William Boshnick, spoke to the Examiner concerning the rejected claims of the present invention. Specifically, Attorney Boshnick showed a model of an embodiment of the present claimed invention as ~~well as~~ a model similar to that disclosed in the applied AOKI reference, and demonstrated how this reference failed to teach or suggest the invention as claimed in rejected claims 1-5. The Examiner agreed that the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest at least at least the feature wherein each of the opposite ends of the at least one linear guide groove are open such that the support frame is movable to extend from either of the sides of the ring portion, as claimed in independent claim 1. However, the Examiner indicated that he would conduct an updated search before making a final decision on allowance.